

The Book Club of California

**QUARTERLY**

News-Letter

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FOUNDED in 1912, The Book Club of California is a non-profit association of booklovers and collectors who have a special interest in Pacific Coast history, literature, and fine printing. Its chief aims are to further the interests of book collectors and to promote an understanding and appreciation of fine books.

The Club is limited to 900 members. When vacancies exist membership is open to all who are in sympathy with its aims and whose applications are approved by the Board of Directors. Regular membership involves no responsibilities beyond payment of the annual dues. Dues date from the month of the member's election. Regular membership is \$18.00; Sustaining \$30.00; Patron \$100.00.

Members receive the *Quarterly News-Letter* and all parts of the current Keepsake series. They have the privilege, but not the obligation, of buying the Club publications, which are limited, as a rule, to one copy per member.

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# The President's Page

By *Albert Shumate, MD*

CONCLUDING MY TERM as President I would like to extend my gratitude to my fellow Directors and all committee members and chairmen for their cooperation and help. During the past two years we have seen the growth of the Club manifested in new expanded quarters and particular thanks are extended to John W. Borden, your new President, for supervising this important project.

In the past year we have had five exhibits in the Club's rooms, enhanced by the elegant new glass exhibit cases. Arranged by Duncan Olmsted and his Exhibit Committee with the able assistance of Albert Sperisen, Chairman of the Library Committee, we enjoyed "Illustrated by Beardsley," and "Mid-nineteenth Century Color Printing" as well as special exhibits arranged in honor of the three books published by the Club during 1970. The Book Club is greatly indebted to Dr. James D. Hart and his Publications Committee who presented us with *Printing as a Performing Art* edited by Ruth Teiser and Catherine Harroun; *Journal of a Journey Across the Plains in 1859* by James Berry Brown, edited by George R. Stewart; and *Sketches of California and Hawaii* by William H. Meyers, Gunner, U.S.N., aboard the United States Sloop of War CYANE 1842-43 edited by John Haskell Kemble, a fitting companion piece to *Journal of a Cruise* by Meyers published by the Book Club in 1955, now long out of print.

The 1970 Keepsake series, as all members know, is a unique collection of colored postcards commemorating *West Coast Expositions and Galas* edited by Club member Samuel Stark the eminent "deltiologist" (postcard collector). I am now at work on the 1971 Keepsake series relating to old western mining certificates.

In retrospect I would say the Club continues to dwell on the same high standards established 59 years ago, managing to remain solvent with a full roster and a waiting list of applicants. Much of this is due to David Magee who has devoted so much of his time throughout the years to the Club and loyally continues his onerous job as editor of the *Quarterly News-Letter*.

Finally I would like to thank all our members for their continued support of The Book Club of California.

# “A Certain Gaiety of Treatment”

## C. H. St. John Hornby and His Ashendene Press

### *An Address by Norman H. Strouse*

COLLECTORS are kindred souls in a very special way. A collector always admires the achievements of another collector, even though he may envy some of his treasures.

So it is a special privilege for me to speak on the occasion of the opening of the exhibition of The Irving W. Robbins, Jr. Ashendene Press Collection in the Stanford University Libraries. It's as handsome a collection of Ashendene Press books as will probably ever be shown. Mr. Robbins deserves our unstinting admiration for his success in having brought together such a galaxy of copies printed on pure vellum, and his generosity in presenting such a collection to Stanford. My personal compliments are adequately expressed, I hope in the exquisite twinge of envy I experience as I pass by the cases.

My interest in printing goes back more than fifty years when I acquired a small box of rubber type which could be set, or squeezed, might be the more accurate description, into five parallel channels in a wooden block. The type surface, then inked on a standard ink pad, would reproduce on paper. I was fascinated with the idea that the letters of the alphabet were in reverse; also that I could reproduce as many copies as I wished, although the text was strictly limited to some of the short quotations I had been collecting from my reading.

It did not occur to me at the time that I was repeating a primitive act which the Chinese had performed more than a thousand years before through the use of tile or wooden calligraphic forms.

During my high school days I dreamed of some day being a printer, and consequently it was a kind of vicarious thrill to carry newspapers in the early morning hours as if this were only one step removed from the excitement of the printing trade.

Washington State College offered a printing course at the time, and I had some correspondence with this college with the thought that I might be accepted there on graduation from high school. I didn't make

it for the usual economic reasons existing then which allowed only the more affluent families to send their children to college. I had to work for a living from age 16 on.

The next best thing for one who loved books and dreamed of type and printer's ink was to work on a newspaper, and this fell to my lot by the chance of answering a blind ad in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer for a male secretary. I spent four years on that struggling Hearst newspaper, during which I became as well known in the composing room as I was in the advertising and business offices.

All during those earlier days I was buying books to the extent allowed by a meager budget. One who loved books as I did could not be content with the transient personal relationship with a book permitted by the public library. So I acquired the habit of browsing in the second hand book shops as a form of educational recreation, paying my way by an occasional modest purchase to add to my shelves. It was not, however, until I became acquainted with the publications of Thomas Bird Mosher that I realized there were two worlds of printing—the normal world of common commercial printing and the more creative world of fine printing or the product of the private presses.

I also discovered that in commercial printing anything was grist to the mill that could be paid for, whereas in fine printing the selection of material was determined by the higher standards of the private printer, who selected only what he himself considered of permanent value, with particular emphasis on the classics. I read Ruskin, William Morris, William Blake, the Brownings, Swinburne, the Rossettis, Oscar Wilde, Walter Pater, Edward Fitzgerald and a number of other English writers for the first time in those beautiful little books which have given Thomas Bird Mosher so enviable and unique a position as a publisher, editor and printer.

My taste in fine printing at this time had not been sufficiently formed to prevent my experiencing a period of high enthusiasm for Elbert Hubbard and his Roycroft Press; but his "Little Journeys" to the homes of notable men and women, all 170 of them, did broaden my knowledge of who *were* the great people of the world, at least in his estimation, and his dilettantish imitation of William Morris and his Kelmscott Press eventually led me to the original.

When I moved to San Francisco in 1929 I became acquainted with the presses that by then were making history in the fine press movement—Nash, the Grabhorn brothers, Windsor Press, and a number of smaller very private little presses that were basking in the warm sun of the Ren-

aissance of fine printing in the Bay Area. And I gradually collected them as I could. The work of John Henry Nash impressed me by its traditionalism in design and superb press work, and I still believe that his *Dante* and *Silverado Squatters* can hold their own among at least the minor masterpieces of fine printing, even though he broke little new ground typographically. The Grabhorn Press had flair, daring, and gave one the feeling of a deliberate flaunting of a lack of inhibition in the faces of those who had settled down comfortably to strictly fundamental principles. In a word, of today at least, the Grabhorn Press was "sexy".

All the while I was only vaguely acquainted with the great printers of the East Coast—Bruce Rogers, Updike, Goudy—and almost totally ignorant of the great revival of fine printing in England led by William Morris. In fact, I knew little about the great tradition of four hundred years of fine printing in Europe from the Incunabula period forward—Gutenberg, Jenson, Plantin, Bodoni, Elzivir, Baskerville, to mention but a few of the masters. I was largely preoccupied with the smaller domestic game, little realizing that there was big game to be had, and that this would provide sufficient excitement to last a lifetime.

I was stunned with the sheer beauty of the first Doves Press book I purchased from David Magee in the early thirties, and this led me immediately on to some acquaintance with other members of the Great Triumverate of English fine printing—Kelmscott and Ashendene—even though I couldn't afford to acquire their works at that time.

Never were three men more unlike each other, in background, in instincts, personality, objectives or professional capabilities—William Morris of Kelmscott, T. J. Cobden-Sanderson of Doves, and C. H. St. John Hornby of Ashendene. Morris was an artist, poet, Medievalist, hand craftsman of all trades, ardent Socialist, full of gusto, a man of infinite parts. The Kelmscott Press was only one of the latest of his many magnificent creative accomplishments, and in fact came into being as a means of satisfying his need for a medium through which he could express his writings and his superb talent for design with exacting quality of reproduction.

Cobden-Sanderson was essentially a mystic, very introspective, deadly serious and largely humorless, outwardly disciplined in his emotions, kindly and affectionate with his family and close friends, but in spiritual turmoil most of his life; a meticulous craftsman who considered perfection in printing and fine binding his own particular form of devotion, not unlike the scribes, illuminators and miniature painters who produced the magnificent illuminated manuscripts of the 13th to 15th century.

St. John Hornby was a business man, his interest in printing springing from his trade. Graduating from Oxford in 1891, he was called to the Bar, but gave this up two years later at the age of 27 to join the stationery firm of W. H. Smith & Son, the booksellers who by 1929 covered England and Wales with their 1250 bookshops and railway station bookstalls. During his short apprenticeship with the firm, he had some instruction in typesetting, and pulled a few sheets of his material on the press. He had no further tuition than this, but it was sufficient to excite his interest, and resulted in establishing a small press of his own, set up in a small garden house in his father's summer place at Ashendene. An Albion Crown press, a font of Caslon Old-Face pica type and minimum collateral equipment got the venture under way in 1895 with his first book, *The Journal of Joseph Hornby*. Only thirty-three copies were printed, creating a frustrating problem for the thirty-fourth collector who attempts to complete his Ashendene collection.

In fact, of the first eleven books from the Ashendene Press, only one was printed in more than fifty copies, so few collectors of this press have experienced the let-down of a completed objective.

It is to the credit of Julius Barclay and Oswalda Deva that they should have the imagination and courage to undertake an exhibition in which every one of the 40 books of the Ashendene Press would be shown, along with many of the minor pieces, ephemera and memorabilia which give special excitement to a truly definitive exhibition of a great man and a great press.

It is not my intent in this brief talk to perform in the role of typographic expert or scholarly critic. I am simply an impassioned collector—long on emotion, short on scholarship—but without prejudice against those critics whose preoccupation with the technical niceties of the game rob them of the sheer joy of the collector in surrounding himself with what is essentially beautiful.

So you must not expect from me any critical observations such as those expressed by Douglas Cleverdon at 1933 when the Ashendene *Thucydides* was released:

“The type was rather lighter than that used in the earlier Ashendene folios, and the page lacked the rich dignity that one might have expected. Moreover, it is doubtful whether the archaic type and the large format suited a modern translation of a Greek classic. Yet the technical mastery revealed in this volume, and the sense of unhurried, unselfconscious tradition that inspired it make it a most desirable possession.”

I'm not sure that I understand all this, and it is ever so slightly stuffy—but I do know that the book is elegant, a treasure to have in one's library, and with such a book the reading of Thucydides becomes a new and exciting adventure, releasing the heroic quality of the history in a way not possible to be experienced through an ordinary trade edition.

As the Ashendene falls into the category of the "private press", I would like to discuss for a few minutes some of the criteria for a private press. In some ways these create a broad enough net as to catch all kinds of fish. The most noted private presses are highly individualistic, because in most instances they are the "lengthened shadow" of one man, although there are some exceptions that would bring joy to the ranks of the women's lib movement. Bertha Goudy, for example, who could hand-set type with the best of them. The sisters Yeats who founded, financed and held reign over the Cuala Press, associating themselves with the Irish literary revival. Gwendolen and Margaret Davies with their famous Gregynog Press producing distinctively striking books and bindings. And here in California Dorothy Allen of the Allen Press and Lillian Marks of the Plantin Press blend their shadows with those of their husbands.

There is the temptation to think of a private press as one where these "lengthened shadow" people do the entire job—decide on the text, create the general design or format of the book, set the type and print by hand, and even collate and bind.

The Allens of Kentfield, California, do this, of course; and Henry Morris of the Bird & Bull Press in North Mills, Pennsylvania, even makes his own paper. This is a private press in its purest and most sentimental form.

But Thomas Bird Mosher did not print any of his own books, and neither did John Henry Nash. Both had them printed outside, but under the strictest of supervision.

Updike ran his Merrymount Press as a commercial project, but took only those commissions he wished to do in terms of style and quality. He designed to meet his own exacting taste, and exercised direct control in his own plant of product quality.

Bruce Rogers was a designer pure and simple. He knew how to set type, of course, and was intimately acquainted with every step of the printing process. In a sense, he was a typographical architect. His work was highly individualistic and superb. His Oxford Lectern Bible, produced at the University Press, Oxford, was undoubtedly the most monumental form given to the Bible in modern fine printing. Only 200 copies were printed, all on handmade paper.

So the term "private press" is confusing. If it is defined as a press, the purpose of which is not to make money, then we would disqualify many great names in the field. But by inserting one word so that the phrase becomes, "the *main* purpose of which is not to make money," we come closer to the target.

If the Grabhorn brothers didn't have to make a living from their work, this was probably news to their friends. It may have been somewhat different with St. John Hornby of the Ashendene, whose press was an expensive hobby, and who claimed that "over a period of years the Press had about paid its way without gain or loss", despite prices that ranged from 25 shillings to 150 guineas. William Morris, with his Kelmscott Press, and Cobden-Sanderson with his Doves, supported staffs of fine craftsmen (and women), and both made some profit, although there were no modern-day accountants present to price in the true value on their own contributed time.

When we think about such presses as have been named in this talk, we should probably deal with the same kind of distinction we find in art—the distinction between commercial art and fine art. Actually, three categories of fine printing probably should be recognized. First, fine printing for the trade, and this could run the gamut from a splendid commercial brochure to the thoroughly delightful Peter Pauper imprints.

Second, and at the other end of the spectrum, there is the joyous and growing product of the amateur hand presses, some small portion of which emerges to surprise the most demanding critics. Leonard Bahr of the Adagio Press in Harper Woods, Michigan, for example, or Henry Evans of the Peregrine Press of San Francisco in its early days before Henry turned "pro" in the field of botanical prints. And if I may use a golfing analogy, we find among the amateur group quite a number, like these two, who are scratch players, whereas others are low-handicap players, and the balance made up of a multitude of good-natured dubs.

The third group falls roughly between these flanks, edging in spirit toward the amateur, and in their professionalism somewhat toward the commercial. We might say that these are the presses representing that labor of love that also makes a living. If they are not "private", they are at least very personal enterprises. It is in this third group that the Ashendene Press eventually found its natural place.

The products of the Ashendene Press during the first eight years, 1894 to 1902, were strictly of a fine amateur character, greatly influenced by Henry Daniel and his Daniel Press. Charles Harry St. John Hornby spent all day in London as a businessman, then he set type in the evenings after

dinner, sometimes assisted by his brother and three sisters, then printed the sheets usually on Sunday mornings. By 1896 he had his own handmade paper with his own special watermark, first used for the printing of *Three Poems of John Milton*.

On March 13, 1895, Sir Sydney Cockerell entered in his diary that Hornby had come to Hammersmith to see the Kelmscott Press, and was able to observe William Morris busy with the production of his great folio *Chaucer*. Although this was the one and only contact between these two men, the visit was a stimulating one to Hornby and undoubtedly influenced his future plans in the direction of more ambitious projects.

Through Cockerell, Hornby had become acquainted with Emery Walker and they became lifelong friends. In 1900 Walker asked Hornby, "Why don't you have, like Morris, a special type of your own?" Hornby's hesitancy was countered by Walker's assurance that this could be done at a figure of not more than 100 pounds. In 1892 William Morris had bought a copy of Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*, printed in 1467, by Sweynheym and Pannartz, in the monastery of Subiaco near Rome. The type of the book was a somewhat compressed design, very elegant, neither Roman nor Gothic. Morris had planned a new type based on this model, and had gone so far as to design a lower-case alphabet. Through the use of photographs of Morris' designs and with the aid of Emery Walker, a new typeface named Subiaco was created, and used for the first time in the *La Commedia di Dante*.

As mentioned earlier, the preceding books had all been printed in small quantities, only one exceeding 50 copies in number, and all used as gifts to his friends. The *Dante*, however, resulted in some modification in the strictly personal character of the press, and Hornby began to employ a single pressman and a single compositor, and to make his books available on subscription at a price. But, as Hornby states in his *Bibliography*, "during all the years of its existence, I have continued to work at (the press) long and strenuously with my own hands and have never been content with merely supervising the handiwork of others."

From this point on, not less than one important book issued from the Press each year, and the series of his great folios got under way—the two volumes of Spencer's poetry, the monumental *Dante*, ranking with the Kelmscott *Chaucer* and *Doves Bible* as being among the most beautiful books printed in modern times, the handsome Boccaccio *Il Decameron* printed in three colors, and the heroic *Le Morte D'Arthur*. Twenty-five years after the creation of the Subiaco typeface, Hornby, in collaboration with Emery Walker again, created another typeface, modelled upon the

type of F. Holle, of Ulm, used by this Incunabular printer in 1482 for *Geographia* of Ptolemaeus, the only book in which this type had been found. It was first used for the Ashendene two-volume edition of *Don Quixote*, in 1927, then for *Daphnis and Chloe*, and finally for his *Bibliography*.

Hornby drew on the finest talent available in the decorative and illustrative elements in his books. Graily Hewitt filled in by hand the colored initials in many books, and designed several alphabets of initials for More's *Utopia*. Charles Gere drew the illustrations for *Dante*, *Morte D' Arthur* and two books by St. Francis. A number of the original woodcuts from these various books are to be seen in this exhibition.

The trade name of W. H. Smith appears on many of the bindings of the later Ashendene books. Few people realize that Douglas Cockerell was in charge of Smith's bindery and that these bindings are in every sense of the word Cockerell bindings. In his *Bibliography*, Hornby says that "the two chief determining factors (which led me to become an amateur printer) were, without a doubt, a love of books for their form as well as for their contents, and a love of working with my hands—a natural leaning toward craftsmanship . . . The Press was started solely for the sake of the interest and amusement I expected to derive from it."

Yet his influence in the field of fine printing is as great today as that of Cobden-Sanderson and William Morris, and it may be significant that during the past two or three years the Ashendene books have been bringing higher prices than the products of the other two presses, with the single exception of the Kelmscott *Chaucer*.

On another occasion Hornby spoke about the choice of books he printed. He said, "I have been influenced partly by the suitability of a book from a purely typographic standpoint. My choice therefore has fallen, in a majority of cases, upon books which gave scope for a certain gaiety of treatment in the use of colored initials and chapter headings or marginal notes in color."

This sense of gaiety is precisely what distinguishes the Ashendene Press from Kelmscott and Doves. By contrast, although making lavish use of decorative borders and initials, as well as of illustration, there is somewhat of an unrelieved solemnity about the Kelmscott books, such as one encounters in the great cathedrals of the medieval period to which William Morris was so deeply devoted.

In a far different manner, the Doves Press books reflect the disciplined aestheticism of its proprietor, Cobden-Sanderson. Not a single illustration was ever used, even though in his essay on *The Ideal Book* he includes illustration as "the other expressive constituent of the Book Beautiful"

... and emphasizes "its relation, in the field of imagination to the rest of the subject matter, the thought of the book . . . a relation and a most important relation, in the field of the senses to the vehicle of communicating, the immediate typographical environment, amid which it appears." Cobden-Sanderson used but a single typeface, allowing himself the sole luxury of the classic initials of Graily Hewitt, and the gentle flourishing of Edward Johnston.

The late Roland Baughman, head of Special Collections, Columbia University Libraries, wrote in the Huntington Library catalogue of "Great Books in Great Editions": "Hornby, as his contribution, may be said to have actually reproduced the best in fifteenth-century bookmaking. His books are frankly luxurious; the types are fine, the margins broad, the lines well spaced, the initials splendidly designed, and the illustrations in perfect harmony with the crisp typography. Moreover, the virile red-and-blue rubrications are placed nicely over the pages, revealing an instinct for color balance not often found except in fifteenth century books."

In other words, Hornby followed instinctively, I believe, the precepts established by Cobden-Sanderson in *The Ideal Book*. However, there seems to be no record of Cobden-Sanderson ever commenting favorably on St. John Hornby's work, or that of any other for that matter.

Perhaps he was too egocentric for that. ☙

## *An Additional Frank Norris Letter*

Pursuant to the practice<sup>1</sup> of supplementing *The Letters of Frank Norris*, published by the Book Club of California in 1956, by printing in the *Quarterly News-Letter* any additional items which come to light from Norris' very limited extant correspondence, the following letter is herein reproduced. Recently added to the Clifton Waller Barrett Collection at the University of Virginia, it proves to have been written to an unidentified Mr. Daniel (or possibly Mr. Daniels, as Norris' handwriting is not here entirely clear) who, like many another young hopeful, had written to an established writer to ask for advice as how to enter the game. It is true he wrote to a novelist though he wanted to become a journalist but the American practice of passing one's apprenticeship for authorship in a newspaper office had long been a standard procedure. At the time of the inquiry

1. See the *Quarterly News-Letter* for Fall, 1960; Summer, 1962; and Winter, 1967.

Norris was just such an established writer, who had spent his apprenticeship on the weekly *San Francisco Wave* and had done special correspondence in South Africa at the time of the Jameson Raid and in Cuba during the Spanish-American War; passing on to authorship, he had published five novels, the most recent one being *The Octopus*, and was working on *The Pit*. He wrote his reply on the stationery of Doubleday, Page and Company, a leading New York publishing company for which he had been reading manuscripts for a number of years, although a couple of months had passed since he had given up that onerous task, confident that at thirty-one he could support himself and his family from the royalties on his novels. Had he lived long enough, he might have learned whether Mr. Daniel had an "ultimate success" but he died less than a year after penning his advice.

In that advice Norris took the typical attitude of the period in assuring Mr. Daniel that an academic training would be of little value in furthering a journalistic career. That he thought little of college classes as a preparation for journalism was not surprising; even in his *Wave* days he had been outspoken about the ineffectiveness of composition classes such as the one he had taken at Berkeley. "Elegant composition" was the sort of thing he had in mind later when he wrote to a reviewer of *McTeague*: "That pleased me most in your review of 'McTeague' was 'disdaining all pretensions to style.' It is precisely what I try most to avoid. I detest 'Fine writing,' 'rhetoric,' 'elegant English'—tommyrot. Who cares for fine style! Tell your yarn and let your style go to the devil. We don't want literature, we want life."<sup>2</sup>

Dec. 2 1901.<sup>3</sup>

My Dear Mr Daniel:

Your favor of Nov. 30. is to hand and I confess myself somewhat at a loss to answer you with that definiteness which any advice of value should boast.

Such newspaper work as I have had was confined solely to weekly journalism and special correspondance [sic] upon special occasions, while your work I take it is to be rather reportorial.

If such is the case I do not think you will miss a college training in the least. The 'English' you would become acquainted with at a university

2. Quoted from a letter to Isaac F. Marcosson written March 14, 1899. See *The Letters of Frank Norris*, edited by Franklin Walker, pp 30-31.

3. ALS in the Clifton Waller Barrett Collection, University of Virginia. Published by permission of the University of Virginia.

would be of the strictly literary quality which is not only unrequired by the daily press but is I am told even deprecated.

To my mind the thing that does most to the making of a good reporter is a training in the line of rapid—rather than elegant composition, and an observation almost photographic. These I am sure you can attain with practice in the actual give and take business of the reporter's life. The "intelligent and assiduous study" you speak of is admirable so far as it goes but I do not believe it must be interpreted to mean *home study*, no matter what branch of the profession of writing you determine on.

The best way to learn to be a reporter is to report, and best school of journalism is the office of a journal.

I am aware that this is but meagre advice, but it is the best I have and as such it is yours with my best wishes and God's speed.

I should be glad to hear from you in case of your ultimate success.

Very sincerely yrs

Frank Norris

FRANKLIN WALKER

## The Fifteenth Century's Great Picture Book

By *Ellen Shaffer*

[Continued from last issue]

Sixteen years after the publication of the first German and Latin editions, the partners gathered together for a final accounting. There were now only three, as Pleydenwurff, the step-son of Wolgemuth, and probably the youngest member of the group, had died. It is estimated that there were about 2,000 copies of each edition, and at the time of the final settlement, 571 remained unsold and of that number 485 were the Latin edition. The places in which some of the unsold copies were located shows how widely Koberger distributed his publications. There were 111 in Breslau, 40 in Bologna, 70 in Florence, 236 in Milan, as well as copies in Budapest, Vienna, Paris, and Lyons.

No more editions were printed and the great picture book was left to the judgment of posterity. One unknown admirer about 1585 prized the work so highly that he copied every single word of the text—his manuscript is now in the New York Public Library. In 1683 one John Christopher Wagenseil, professor at the Nuremberg University of Altdorf cited the Chronicle as the authority for his statement that America was discovered

by a native of Nuremberg, Martin Behaim, a claim which was again advanced in 1786 by one of Benjamin Franklin's German correspondents, M. Otto. In 1724, Thomas Hearne praised it as "extremely pleasant, useful, and Curious." In the 19th century Thomas Dibdin devoted 25 pages in his *Biblioteca Spenceriana* to an enthusiastic description of its charms.

In the 20th century it has not lacked admirers either. In 1937 a Chicago lawyer, Walter W. Schmauch, came across the German edition and was so intrigued by it that he devoted the next five years to translating it into English and heavily annotating his translation. His typescript, which was sold to the Free Library of Philadelphia after his death, is contained in eight quarto volumes and numbers some 3,000 pages, double-spaced. Mr. Schmauch, quite understandably, had failed to find a publisher, possibly because he was anxious to have all of his voluminous notes included. A San Francisco printer, Adrian Wilson, has become interested in presenting this great mediaeval Chronicle in an English translation, together with all its woodcuts. He recently made some specimen sheets which make one long to see the project completed. Mr. Wilson has the talent and the enthusiasm, all that is needed is money. Will lovers of the grand old book please rally with money and suggestions.

A few years ago a thirteen-year old lad spent a Saturday afternoon at the Free Library of Philadelphia, for the first time exploring the wonders of the Nuremberg Chronicle. He was obviously intrigued and the librarian waited for this brash youngster's judgment of the 15th century's greatest printed picture book. After lingering over the final page he said: "Gosh, we think we are so good, and look what they did." One may well look, and as we look our admiration becomes warmed by affection. The creators of the Chronicle accomplished all they set out to do—and more.



## Gallimaufry

JULIUS P. BARCLAY, Chief, Department of Special Collections, Stanford University and Chairman of the Rare Books Section of the Association of College and Research Librarians, reports that the Section is sponsoring a Preconference to be held at the University of Texas at Austin from June 17 through 19. Book Club members Miss Ellen Shaffer, John Swingle, and William Wreden are serving on the Program Committee. In conjunction with the 90th conference of the ALA, the ACRL Rare Books Section will have an open program meeting at Southern Methodist University at Dallas. John Swingle will be one of the speakers.

"A Certain Gaiety of Treatment. C. H. St. John Hornby and his Ashendene Press" was the title of a lecture given February 10 by Book Club Director Mr. Norman H. Strouse at the opening of an exhibition of books printed at the Ashendene Press. The exhibition entitled "The Hobby of my Leisure Hours", shown in the Albert M. Bender Room, Main Library, Stanford University through April 10, was arranged in appreciation of the Ashendene Press collection which Book Club member Irving W. Robbins presented to Stanford in 1969. In addition to the Robbins Collection the exhibition was further enriched by generous loans from Mr. Duncan H. Olmsted, Mr. Stuart B. Schimmel and Mr. Strouse. Mr. Mallette Dean designed and printed the bookplate for the Robbins Collection.

OF LOSS to the world of scholarship is the recent death of the western historian Dale Lowell Morgan.

FOR OUR REFERENCE LIBRARY, we have purchased the much revised edition of the famous Gernsheim *History of Photography*. This mighty tome was originally produced by the Oxford University Press in 1955. This, the revised and enlarged edition, has been published by Thames and Hudson in 1969. It is a large quarto of 600 pages with 390 reproductions of photographs and line engravings.

## Book Reviews

JESSE BENTON FREMONT, *Mother Lode Narratives*, Edited and Annotated by Shirley Sargent. Ashland, Oregon: Lewis Osborne, 1970. 160 pp. Illustrated. 650 copies, \$13.50.

This attractively designed and printed work makes available to present day readers the author's account of her stay at Las Mariposas, the huge Frémont estate in the Sierra foothills, in 1859-60. Originally published in the *Wide Awake Magazine* in 1888-89 and reprinted in a slender volume, *Far West Sketches* (Boston: D. Lathrop & Company, 1890). These reminiscences throw interesting light on what has always been one of the least known chapters of John C. Frémont's well-publicized career; hence they well deserve to be reissued. The value of the present edition is enhanced not only by Shirley Sargent's introduction and her excellent notes on the eight sketches, but by the inclusion of a number of Jessie Frémont's letters that supplement (and in some instances contradict) statements she makes in the text. Endpaper maps and a series of well-selected prints add further distinction to this handsome little volume.

O.L.

*First and Last Consul: Thomas Oliver Larkin and the Americanization of California, a Selection of Letters.* Edited by John A. Hawgood. Second edition. Pacific Books, Publishers, Palo Alto, California, 1970. xi, 147 pp. \$5.75.

Thomas O. Larkin was a shrewd Yankee who arrived in the Mexican province of Alta California in 1832 determined to build a fortune. Soon settling in Monterey, he became the leading merchant of the region, with interests in such diverse fields as lumbering, soap making, and financing the departmental government. In 1843 he was appointed United States consul, and he vastly enjoyed the prestige of the office though its vexatious duties brought little remuneration.

Early in 1846 he wrote to a friend, "May California be the best country in the world and Monterey the best part of California, is my prayer." To Larkin, the "best" meant annexation to the United States, and he worked diligently to bring about this end by peaceful means and through the cooperation of the Spanish-speaking inhabitants. That the change of government, when it came a few months later, was achieved by force of arms reflects Larkin's failure to assess correctly the temper of his times and not any want of sincere effort on his part.

Larkin's pivotal role as private individual and government agent in developing sentiment for union with the United States has been recognized by historians from the days of Bancroft, Hittell, and Royce. But the personality of the sharp trader and land speculator was not particularly colorful, and during the century following his death writers were inspired to produce little more concerning him than a scholarly study of his term as consul and a rather unsatisfactory biography. Even Dr. Robert J. Parker, who had he lived would have published the definitive life of Larkin, admitted that he found it difficult to make a hero of his subject.

Not until 1951, when Dr. George P. Hammond's monumental ten-volume compilation of the Larkin correspondence in the Bancroft Library began to appear, was it possible for the general public to appreciate the far-reaching extent of the consul's interests and the full measure of his fervor for American rule. In 1962, while Dr. Hammond's volumes were still emerging from the University of California Press, Professor John A. Hawgood published *First and Last Consul* under the sponsorship of the Huntington Library. Composed of skillfully selected letters, chiefly from the Leidesdorff and Stearns collections in the latter institution, Dr. Hawgood's work was an indispensable complement to the Hammond series. It presented many of Larkin's outgoing letters, copies of which were not always retained by their author. In choosing which to print, Dr. Hawgood wisely placed the emphasis on those which throw light on Larkin's offi-

cial career. The importance of *First and Last Consul* was quickly recognized, and the edition went out of print in slightly more than three years.

Now Dr. Hawgood and Pacific Books, Publishers, have performed a service by making the book once more available. And in so doing they have provided a bonus—two new appendices in which are printed for the first time a selection of Larkin's personal letters to Faxon Dean Atherton and documents demonstrating that Larkin and his future wife, Rachel Holmes, were the parents of a daughter born out of wedlock early in 1833, "the first native of Alta California with American parents on both sides."

The information about poor Isobel Anna Larkin is not new to knowledgeable students of California history, but its publication may tend to revise the popular view of Larkin as a man of strictly conventional behavior. The letters to Atherton are solid contributions, throwing new light upon California business and politics before and after the American conquest and upon the Bear Flag Revolt—and upon the character of their author who revealingly complained, "My hair grows grey by the excessive working of my brain and ambitions!"

Commendably modest in price, this major book, attractively designed and printed by Grant Dahlstrom, is a bargain. Every serious reader of California history will want it on his bookshelf.

JOHN A. HUSSEY

PHILIP ROSS MAY, *Origins of Hydraulic Mining in California*. Holmes Book Company, Oakland, 1971, 88 pp., \$6.95

This slim volume gives a concise history of this aspect of gold mining in California. The author is a New Zealander associated with the Australian National University. Australia and California are closely linked in their gold rushes. As early as August 20, 1852, the *San Francisco Alta California* stated, "But, lo, a new star rises in the Pacific—California and Australia—the twin gold sisters." Thus it is not strange that May is a resident of far-away Australia.

The author defines hydraulic mining according to the Federal and State statutes, as mining by the application of water under pressure through a nozzle against a bank. In California this term usually meant gold mining.

The method was very effective and of great labor-saving benefit. One-fourth of the gold produced in the 1870's in California was the result of hydraulicking, and, in all, the author estimates \$300,000,000 worth of gold was produced. Nevertheless, bitter conflict between the miners and the valley farmers led to its virtual prohibition in 1883.

May carefully rules out all other claims and concludes that hydraulic mining had its origins in California in 1853. The fathers of the industry were Edward F. Matteson and Anthony Chabot. Their careers are sharply contrasted: Matteson was unable to capitalize on his inventive skill and died in poverty; Chabot became known for his wide-spread business endeavors in Oakland and was a successful Pacific Coast capitalist and philanthropist.

This book is not for the casual reader searching for glamor in the Gold Country. However, for the serious student of the mining industry, May's book is a must. It is a study that should not only be in California's public libraries, but in the libraries of every university and college in the State.

ALBERT SHUMATE, M.D.

WARREN CHAPPELL, *A Short History of the Printed Word*. New York Times Book, published by Alfred A. Knopf, 1970.

I suppose it is time for another short history of printing. This is the third condensed history we have reviewed in as many years—but, this one is better written, looks better and is better illustrated. It was written by Warren Chappell, a master letterer, calligrapher, type-designer, book-designer, illustrator—and a noted writer on all of these subjects. He is truly a man of many parts. Unhappily, there are in his book a few errors, some typographic and some questionable theories.

Chappell's first book, *The Anatomy of Lettering*, is as excellent a thesis today as it was when it was written in 1935. (The dust-jacket of this new work gives the date 1934—but this is only one of several publisher's mistakes.) The lettering book reflects the apprenticeship that Chappell spent with the noted German master, Rudolf Koch. Later, Chappell designed type faces—his best known is Lydian, a type-form clearly derivative of his years with Koch. Today, Chappell is internationally known as an illustrator. His mentor here was the famous American illustrator-painter, Boardman Robinson. Chappell was as influenced by Robinson as he was by Koch—his drawings are stamped with a “Robinsonesque” quality. But, he is famous for his many illustrated books for The Limited Editions Club and he has designed many more for the general book trade. By way of relaxing, Chappell has written and illustrated—and designed—many children's books. So much for background.

When Chappell writes within his forte, lettering, type-designing and illustration, he is on firm ground and these chapters carry authority. Much of his “shop talk,” particularly on Koch, is extremely fascinating.

On Edward Johnston, the great teacher of calligraphy, Chappell invited Alfred Fairbank, a former pupil of the master, and today one of the best exponents on pen-writing, to write this chapter. This too is excellent. But, compressing 500 years (1440-1940) of fine printing and its allied arts into a 244-page book set in 12 point type—with illustrations for the most part occupying better than a half a page—Chappell has taken on a job few experts would have dared.

Some errors are due to dropped words, the result of careless proof-reading. For example, for want of a dropped word on page 205, Bruce Rogers is elevated to the exalted position of a Director of the Riverside Press. Chappell meant, of course, *typographical* director.

And of questionable statements: On page 204, the author states: . . . “Herbert Horne, a designer with Morris . . .” Indeed! If this were true, the fact escaped every biographer of Morris including his son-in-law, H. Holliday Sparling.

Earlier, speaking of Morris, Chappell implies that the 7-volume *Renaissance in Italy*, (1875-86) by John Addington Symonds, played an important part in the re-awakening of the Renaissance ideal in England, particularly with Morris and the Pre-Raphaelites. This is a tall statement, without proof. Had he left out Morris’ name, it might well be accurate. Symonds’ *magnum-opus* was widely read in its time (and it is even quoted today) and it is likely that it had some influence in promoting the Renaissance ideals, but we doubt it influenced Morris—or if Morris even read it. (By the way, should anyone want to check this reference, he will not find it in the index. Symonds is not mentioned in spite of the fact that this story occupies almost two pages, 16 and 17. Another unhappy fault.)

A point which bothers this reviewer, will not, I’m sure, upset anyone else. It is patently obvious that Chappell does not think much of Charles Ricketts as a type-designer — he doesn’t mention any of his three type faces. But this “oversight” is shared, I’m afraid, by many other authorities. However, when Chappell chooses to illustrate the work of Lucien Pissarro and his Eragny Press, and selects their *Book of Ruth and Esther*, 1896, as a prime example, he selected a book printed in Ricketts’ Vale type! To better make his point, Chappell should have used any of Pissarro’s books after 1904 when the press used their own Brook type face. (Although Ricketts is mentioned in the proper chronology of printers who followed Morris, he is not listed in the index.)

In his mention of the Cranach Press’ *Virgil*, Chappell states that “the initials and title lettering are by Johnston and Gill . . .” *This is not true.* Eric Gill did all of the initials except two. These two were drawn (and

engraved) by Maillol—who, incidentally designed all of them. Johnston *did* design the type face for this work under the direction of Emery Walker.

On page 222, the author says: "Other presses of the period that were dedicated to fine printing were The Golden Cockerel and St. Dominic's in England." There is no argument about the position of The Golden Cockerel Press, but this reviewer cannot believe that Pepler of St. Dominic's was ever conscious of fine printing *per se*. He was an interesting designer-printer and he did manage a few outstanding books—but these were the exception and never the rule. He certainly wasn't "dedicated" to fine printing.

Regardless of these errors noted (and some are pure opinions) this is still a worthwhile book and a reasonably good quick reference work for any collector or reference library. Through the good offices of Alfred A. Knopf, the Club owns a copy and it may be seen in our reference collection.

ALBERT SPERISEN



## Annual Meeting 1971

John W. Borden, Charles A. Fracchia, James D. Hart, Martin Mitau and Dr. Albert Shumate were re-elected to another term on the Board.

In the subsequent election of officers for the year, John W. Borden was elected President; Duncan H. Olmsted Vice-President; and Wm. P. Barlow, Jr. re-elected Treasurer.

The following committees have been appointed to serve for the year:  
*Exhibits*: Duncan H. Olmsted (Chairman), S. Gale Herrick, Eleanor Hesthal, Albert Sperisen

*House*: Mrs. R. F. Ferguson (Chairman), Mark Hanrahan, Mrs. Harold A. Wollenberg.

*Library*: Albert Sperisen (Chairman), William P. Barlow, Jr.

*Membership*: Joseph M. Bransten (Chairman), Michael Harrison, Warren R. Howell, David Magee, Florian J. Shasky.

*Publications*: James D. Hart (Chairman), Warren R. Howell, Oscar Lewis, David Magee.

*Quarterly News-Letter*: See inside front cover.

*Keepsakes*: Martin S. Mitau (Chairman).

## Elected to Membership

The following have been elected since the publication of the Winter News-Letter:

<i>Member</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Sponsor</i>
E. Kenneth Bennett	Torrance	John Nomland
Harold A. Berliner	Nevada City	Edward H. Heller
Mrs. F. William Blaisdell	San Francisco	Charles A. Fracchia
Thomas L. Brisch	Geneva, Illinois	Membership Committee
Mrs. Clyde Corcoran	Whittier	Julius Barclay
Francis L. Cross	San Francisco	Warren R. Howell
Robert B. Fisher, M.D.	Fremont	John Swingle
Mr. & Mrs. James Gulbranson	Sylmar	Ardis M. Walker
Warren Heckrotte	Berkeley	John Swingle
S. Gale Herrick	San Francisco	Eleanor Hesthal
Lawrence W. Jordan, Jr.	San Francisco	Mrs. Herman Zischke
Mrs. Lydia Kraus	Madera	Sue Jackson
Alfred Kronfeld	Los Angeles	G. J. Houle
William Charles Kuzell, M.D.	San Francisco	Mervyn C. Eidenmuller
John G. Lilienthal	San Francisco	Theodore Lilienthal
Mr. & Mrs. Luis B. Ortega	Paradise	Henry N. Kuechler, III
Mrs. David Potter	San Francisco	Albert Shumate, M.D.
Leno J. Pozza	Los Angeles	David L. Henson
James F. Reed	San Anselmo	Frazier O. Reed, II
John Scopazzi	San Francisco	Nadine N. Oppenheim
Florian Shasky	San Francisco	Charles Fracchia

The two classifications of membership above Regular Membership are Patron Memberships \$100 a year, and Sustaining Memberships, \$30 a year. The following have entered the Club as Sustaining Members:

<i>Member</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Sponsor</i>
Roderick Brinckman	Orinda	Marjorie Freeman
Samuel Stark	San Francisco	Albert Sperisen

The following have changed from Regular to Sustaining Membership:

Sanford L. Berger	Berkeley
Henry N. Kuechler, III	San Francisco
Mrs. J. C. Plews	Honolulu

## New! *The History of Printing in America*

*The History of Printing in America* by Isaiah Thomas, edited by Marcus McCorison (Director of the American Antiquarian Society), has just been published by the IMPRINT Society.\* First published in 1810, this classic work is still the beginning point for most investigations into the history of American printing. In his introduction, McCorison notes that Thomas's "personal knowledge of many of the people and events which he describes in a frank and unadorned manner makes excellent and often amusing reading... *The History of Printing in America* (leads) the reader into fascinating byways of American history and the craft which in such large measure perpetuated it." The Grolier Club lists Thomas's *History* among its *One Hundred Influential American Books*.

The book has been printed and designed by Roderick Stinehour at the Stinehour Press, using Monotype Bembo and Centaur types. It features a frontispiece engraving of Thomas pulled from an 1811 copperplate plus a tipped-in leaf from the first edition of the *History*. Published in a limited edition of 1950, each copy is hand-numbered and signed by Mr. McCorison.

A limited number of these books are now available from Richard Abel and Company. Priced at \$50, you may deduct 5% for enclosing payment with your order. (No sales tax or postage charges.) 30 day return privileges. Please order from: Special Services, Richard Abel & Company, P. O. Box 4245, Portland, Oregon 97208.



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# THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA

545 Sutter Street San Francisco, California 94102 Phone 781-7532

June 1, 1971

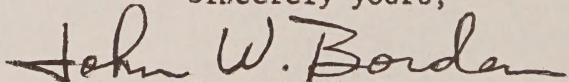
Dear Member:

When costs rise - as they have been doing at The Book Club as well as in each of our homes - something has got to give. Your Board of Directors has given careful and extensive consideration to the rising cost problems at The Book Club and the possible alternatives to offset these increased costs of operation. For example, each member receives approximately 14 to 15 mailings a year from the Club and we are all only too well aware of the recent increases in postage rates. Obviously, there have been other higher costs of operation.

After due deliberation, the Board has voted a modest increase in annual dues and an increase in the allowable size of the Club. Regular membership effective July 1, 1971, will be increased from \$18 to \$20 a year and Sustaining membership from \$30 to \$35 a year. Patron membership remains at \$100 a year. By virtue of these increases, we feel we can continue the pattern of four issues of the Quarterly News-Letter, the regular Keepsake series each year, and the exhibits as well as the open houses. Our alternative was to curtail one or both of these activities. Our waiting list for membership has remained quite constant around the 50 level for some time so we are assured of an increased membership immediately. All of those people currently on the waiting list will be entitled to membership at the former fee schedule.

Non-profit - and tax deductible - organizations such as The Book Club are dependent on dues income and the occasional - but most welcome - generosity of the membership. We want to do more for the members and the community in the graphic arts and western historical field. By our modest increase in dues, we will be able to continue our present programs and initiate new ones. We are confident you will support our action.

Sincerely yours,

  
John W. Borden  
President



# On The Mother Lode

By Philip R. May

Published by the University of Canterbury, New Zealand, this book will be available in March. Demy octavo (5½ x 8½ inches), 64 pages, clothbound, limited to 1000 copies. \$5.25.

The terms 'Mother Lode' or 'Mother Lode Country' are familiar to California gold-mining buffs and are regularly employed in popular accounts and histories of the California gold rush. This monograph examines the several ways in which the term 'Mother Lode' is applied in California, but in particular it questions the common assumption that 'Mother Lode' was coined early in the gold rush years.

Its introduction in California is here placed in the latter 1860's and it is attributed not to the early experience of Mexican and American quartz miners, but is related to the opening of Nevada's Comstock Lode and the writings of a group of geologists and mining publicists. Thereafter, the useage 'Mother Lode' is linked with the erratic history of hardrock mining in the Sierra gold country and its adoption is shown to be closely tied to the fortunes of this sector of California's gold-mining industry.

Because of its bearing on the evolution of precious metal mining in the American West, the monograph will be of interest to historians of the mining frontier, besides being a contribution to the etymology of a popular California term.

Mr. May is the author of *WEST COAST GOLD RUSHES* and *GOLD TOWN*, both concerned with New Zealand gold mining, and *ORIGINS OF HYDRAULIC MINING IN CALIFORNIA*, published by this firm.



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